

Message Text

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60

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 DHA-02 CIAE-00

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O R 270027Z AUG 76 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7076

AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ

AMCONSUL GUADALAJARA

AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO

AMCONSUL MATAMOROS

AMCONSUL MAZATLAN

AMCONSUL MERIDA

AMCONSUL MONTERREY

AMCONSUL NUEVO LAREDO

AMCONSUL TIJUANA

UNCLAS MEXICO 11087

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MX

SUBJECT: PROPOSED HUNGER STRIKE BY AMERICAN PRISONERS

REF: MEXICO 10963

1. FOLLOWING IS A RESUME OF INFORMATION AND COMMENTS
GATHERED FROM AMERICAN PRISONERS HERE REGARDING
PROPOSED HUNGER STRIKE. WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN COPY
OF THE LETTEERS BEING CIRCULATED PROMOTING STRIKE,
BUT THERE APPEARS TO BE MORE THAN ONE TEXT IN
CIRCULATION, OR ELSE THERE ARE LOCAL VARIATIONS
BEING WORKED OUT. FOR EXAMPLE, TEXT OF LETTER
AVAILABLE IN MAZATLAN STATES THAT PURPOSE OF

STRIKE IS TO PUT PRESSURE ON USG AND GOM TO SPEED

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NEGOTIATIONS FOR A PRISONER EXCHANGE, SPECI-

FYING THAT THE INTENT IS TO BRING AMERICAN PRISONERS BACK TO U.S. AS PRISONERS TO COMPLETE THEIR SENTENCES, NOT TO BE RELEASED. ON THE OTHER HAND, PRISONERS HERE ARE TALKING ABOUT PROSPECTS OF REDUCED SENTENCES TO COMPENSATE FOR THE DEPLORABLE CONDITIONS WHICH THEY SUFFERED AT LECUMBERRI, OR POSSIBILITY OF SOME FORM OF COMMUNITY SERVICE IN LIEU OF FURTHER IMPRISONMENT IN U.S.

2. IMPETUS FOR THE STRIKE STEMS FROM SENSE OF FRUSTRATION OVER LACK OF PERCEIVED PROGRESS TOWARD NEGOTIATING TRANSFER OF SANCTIONS AGREEMENT. IN MEXICO CITY, PRISONERS' FRUSTRATION HAS BEEN FED, PERHAPS UNWITTINGLY, BY SOME PRISON SOCIAL WORKERS WHO REPORTEDLY HAVE TOLD PRISONERS THAT GOM IS READY TO SEND THE PRISONERS HOME BUT USG IS DRAGGING ITS FEET. PERSISTENT RUMORS THAT PRISONERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES WILL BE SENT HOME

VERY SHORTLY ALSO FEED DISCONTENT. EMBASSY EFFORTS TO DISPROVE THERE RUMORS, WHICH HAVE BEEN SPECIFICALLY DENIED BY UNDERSECRETARY OF GOVERNACION, GARCIA RAMIREZ, AND BY OFFICERS OF OTHER EMBASSIES, HAVE BEEN GREETED WITH SKEPTICISM. ADDING TO THE CHARGED PSYCHOLOGICAL ATMOSPHERE HERE IS THE DEPRESSION CAUSED BY A RECENT SPATE OF UNUSUALLY STIFF COURT SENTENCES AND THE UPHEAVAL CREATED BY THE TRANSFER FROM LECUMBERRI INTO THE TWO NEW PRISONS. ILLOGICAL AS IT MAY SEEM, PRISONERS RECENTLY TRANSFERRED TO THE NEW MODEL PRISONS ARE NOW COMPLAINING ABOUT THE LACK OF COMFORTS THEY FORMERLY ENJOYED IN LECUMBERRI. IN EFFECT, THEY COMPLAIN THAT THEY ARE NOW IN INSTITUTIONS WHICH DO NOT PERMIT IRREGULARITIES, AND THEY FEEL FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT THEY ARE REALLY IN PRISON.

3. UNDERLYING MOTIVATION FOR THE STRIKE IS CLEARLY THE CONVICTION GENERALLY HELD BY PRISONERS HERE UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT THE EMBASSY AND THE DEPARTMENT WERE SPURRED ON TO THE PRESENT LEVEL OF EFFORTS TO ASSIST PRISONERS ONLY BY ORGANIZED PROTEST MEASURES, AND ESPECIALLY BY THE LECUMBERRI HUNGER STRIKE OF JULY, 1974. CONOFF AND CONSULAR ASSISTANT VISITING LECUMBERRI IN JULY WERE TOLD "THE ONLY REASON YOU ARE HERE TODAY IS BECAUSE WE WENT ON A HUNGER STRIKE IN 1974." THOSE PRISONERS WHO SUPPORT

THE PRESENT STRIKE PROPOSAL BELIEVE THAT THE SAME TACTICS ON A WIDER SCALE WILL PRODUCE EVEN GREATER RESULTS. TEXT OF LETTER BEING CIRCULATED IN MAZATLAN INCLUDES A DETAILED DESCRIPTION BY A FORMER PRISONER AT LECUMBERRI OF THE 1974 HUNGER STRIKE AND THE MEASURES USED BY THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION TO BREAK IT UP. (RESUME OF 1974 STRIKE BEING REPORTED SEPTTEL).

4. EMBASSY LEARNED AUGUST 26 THROUGH A REGULAR VISITOR TO ONE OF THE DISTRICT PRISONS THAT 1732 INC. IN CALIFORNIA ACCEPTS NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ORGANIZING HUNGER STRIKE. EMBASSY WAS TOLD THAT STRIKE MIGHT HAVE BEEN INSTIGATED BY DWIGHT WORKER (PRISONER WHO ESCAPED IN DECEMBER 1975 FROM LECUMBERRI) WHO HAS WRITTEN A BOOK ON HIS ESCAPE WHICH WILL SOON BE ON BOOKSTANDS, AND IS PRODUCING A MOVIE. HUNGER STRIKE COULD BE PART OF PUBLICITY

FOR BOOK.
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